

Lord teach us to pray

You have encouraged your members, presented skits, selected special hymns and perhaps planned some other special events for an *All Are Welcome* weekend or Sunday. Don't forget the most vital aspect: *bathe the whole process with prayer!*

Begin by encouraging your members to pray for those who they might invite to worship. Our first prayer might be, "God make me aware of the people around me who are searching and want to hear about your love." God is already at work in the lives of the people with whom we live and work. Our role is to be God's instrument for reaching and inviting people to come to know the God who is at work in their lives. Prayer is the place we begin as we seek to discover who it is in our lives that God wants to invite home.

Prayer is also the place where we turn to find the courage, the words and the opportunities to invite others. As we approach *All Are Welcome* Sunday, encourage your people to pray for specific people who might be open to an invitation.

Here is one way that you can help this to happen: *Create a "prayer box" in which members can place a confidential form naming those they intend to pray for and invite to worship.*

Select a sturdy box. If it's not very attractive, decorate it with fabric, remnants of wallpaper or any other covering that will be attractive in your worship space. Leave only a narrow opening in the top of the box to assure confidentiality.

Then use the provided forms for your members to fill out. Have members carry their prayer pledges forward to place them in the box. Pray for all the people who are represented by the forms in the box during worship each Sunday (not by name, of course, but as a group). You might consider giving members buttons, stones or some other small item that can be carried in a pocket or coin purse to help remind members of their prayer pledge.



And don't just do this for *All Are Welcome* Sunday. Keep the reminder going throughout the year, by making prayer forms available and praying for those named in the prayer box during worship at least once a month.